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Hongkong, 1st March, 1897. [30]

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A. S. WATSON & CO., LD.
THE HONGKONG DISPENSARY,
Hongkong, 8th December, 1897. [7]

The Hongkong Telegraph

HONGKONG, FRIDAY, MAY 6, 1898.

REUTER'S MESSAGES.

THE SPANISH AMERICAN WAR.

LONDON, May 4th.
There is still no further news from Manila. The bulk of the American fleet blockading Havana suddenly went to Key West and after coaling, sailed, it is supposed with the purpose of encountering the Spanish fleet. The Spanish Board has decided that the Spanish Squadron must be destroyed before Havana is captured.

The Times correspondent at New York states that President McKinley has determined to retain the Philippines until the close of the war, when if Spain fails to pay an indemnity, the islands will be sold to a European power, presumably to Great Britain.

SPAIN.

Wild scenes have occurred in the Madrid Chamber. Señor Sagasta was fiercely attacked on account of the Manila disaster and the unpopularity of Spain in spite of the immense Colonial credits.

LOCAL AND GENERAL.

H.M.S. Swift arrived here from Kuda this morning.

SIXTY two acres on Crown lands were to-day sold for \$2 each.

The Russian contract for armour plates, recently given to the Carriage mills, is for two armoured gunboats.

For behaving in a disorderly manner, the cook of Mr. A. Rodriguez was to-day fined \$10 in default one month.

The Prince of Wales is energetically learning bicycle riding at the Riviera, accompanied by an instructor and an equerry.

A CHINAMAN, who attempted to assault another with a knife, in the Navy Yard, was to-day fined \$25 in default two months' hard labour.

The *Hat-Shan*, the third of the three Chinese protected cruisers of 2050 tons, was launched at Seattle, February 1st. The contract delivery of these three ships will be exceeded by nearly six months.

H.M.S. *Rainbow* left here for home this afternoon and on steaming out of the harbour the crews of H.M. ships in port cheered their comrades most heartily, the men on the *Rainbow* replying with equal enthusiasm.

CONTRACT for an armoured cruiser of 7700 tons, to be named *Kibor*, has been given to the Chantiers et Ateliers de la Gironde Company. The ship is to be delivered in fifty-one months, dating from December 9th of last year, and to be ready for her official test three months later.

The amount of love lost between France and Germany may be estimated from the following telegram:—London, March 30th.—Speaking at Châlons yesterday, General Pelléu said that France had better fight and cannon than Germany, and would be able to take her own opportunity for striking in retaliation.

A CURIOUS example of red tape is reported from India. Colour Sergeant Walker of the Royal Scots Fusiliers, who was kept a prisoner by the Afghans for six weeks, was tried by court-martial on his return to his regiment for "being absent without leave." He was, of course, acquitted, but, grotesque as it may seem, was ordered to lose his pay for the time he was away.

The whole of the troops in Geyser were this morning taken down to Happy Valley for a rehearsal of the Queen's Birthday review. The King's Own went with their files and drums playing familiar marching airs and the Hongkong regiment also made the pace a merry one. The men did the various marches past in good style and the show on the 24th promises to be one well worth seeing.

A CURIOUS official notice respecting a dead body appears in the Dutch newspapers. The police give notice that a man has drowned himself in the Rhine, and they offer a reward for the recovery of his body. This is the description:—"A man about forty, height five feet eight inches. Speaks the dialect of Gelderland." People are wondering how the last indication will help them in the search.

THE funeral of the late Miss Ireland (Sister Gertrude) took place yesterday and was largely attended, among those present being His Honour Sir J. W. Carrington (Chief Justice), Hon. T. Sercombe Smith, Hon. R. Murray Ramsey, Hon. F. H. May and Hon. R. D. Omsby and a number of ladies. The body was taken in a launch to Bowlington whence it was carried by members of the Police Force. Dr. Aikinson, Bell, and Lowson and other members of the Hospital staff walked by the side of the coffin, and the Sisters followed in the rear. A number of members of the Police Force also attended the funeral, many of them carrying wreaths and crosses. The service was conducted by the Rev. R. F. Cobbold and at the conclusion of the ceremony the Chinese and Indian members of the Hospital staff deposited many wreaths and crosses on the grave.

MESSRS. Wheelock & Co.'s *Karaima Market Report*, dated Shanghai, and May, says:—American.—Business for spot cargo has been somewhat limited, but at slightly enhanced prices, Devoes having changed hands at \$11. 65 per case with probable buyers at this rate. It was expected at one time that prices would considerably advance on account of the trouble now existing between America and Spain, but this has not been the case, because the bulk of the oil that is being transported to this in English bottoms, there being only four American sailers on the way. These have been a very large business done in cargo to arrive at \$11. 25 per case, May and June shipment or forward clearances. Stocks, 487,200 cases. Balances.—There is no stock of case oil and business has been small at \$11. 50 for bulk. The *s.s. Trocas* arrived on the 21st instant with the equivalent of 130,000 cases. Stocks 117,000 cases. Langkat.—Has been dealt in at a fair extent at a slight decline in price. The *Astral* arrived on the 23rd inst. with about 92,000 cases.

MESSRS. Wheelock & Co.'s *Coal Market Report*, dated Shanghai, and May, says:—Japan.—Since last writing "we" have not had much enquiry and natives show no disposition whatever to pay the prices asked by holders. Rates of freight have further advanced, but as we have been unable to obtain any effect, we do not alter quotations. Cardiff.—Owing to the trouble in the South business has transpired at \$12. 25 per ton, but only in small quantities for immediate consumption. The *s.s. Trumham Hall* arrived on the 27th inst., bringing 5,800 tons, which is now being landed; we have heard that the greater portion has been sold at the above named figure. Sydney Wollongong.—When we wrote last, we considered that the price required by first hands, namely, \$12. 25 was necessary before business could be done, but it has since turned out that the demand was so great that \$12. 15 per ton was paid for two cargoes to arrive, and we also hear that \$12. 15 has been given for a seller. Quotations.—The undermentioned figures are based on the most recent settlements for cargoes to arrive and do not represent the present market rates for coals in stock, which fluctuate with the supply and demand.—Cardiff, ex godown \$12. 25 per ton. American Anthracite, ex godown 15 per ton nominal. Sydney Wollongong, steamer cargo ex godown 15 per ton sales. Japan, \$12. 25 & 3 per ton. All contracted for.

PLAQUE regulations have been ordered against arrivals from Jeddah, where three deaths from the plague have occurred.

A BOATMAN was to-day charged with neglecting to exhibit a light on his boat in the harbour. He was fined \$10 or one month.

INSPECTOR Hanson and a party of police raided a house in Hollywood Road last night and bagged four gamblers. The first two were fined \$25 each or two months and the other two were fined \$3 or fourteen days.

ADVICES received at Jamaica from Port au Prince, Hayti, report a terrible financial condition there. The premium on gold is 220 per cent. The greatest misery and starvation prevails in the interior, and flour costs \$30 a barrel.

THE British torpedo-boat destroyer, *Sturgeon*, has come to grief. During a projected sea trip something went wrong and she came into Portsmouth under the starboard engine. An examination revealed the fact that the shaft of the port propeller had broken off and that the shaft was bent and twisted, the ladder smashed and the hull badly damaged.

THE Paris Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has received a legacy of 3,000,000 francs from Mme. Chasseguet, who was a noted demi-monde under the second empire. The conditions attached are that precautions shall be taken to prevent the ill treatment of horses, and an effort made to improve the condition of the public pounds.

THE French line steamer *La Bretagne*, which sailed from Havre took 100 carrier pigeons with the view of testing the possibility of establishing communication with the shore in case of accident. If the experiment is successful all steamers of the French line will hereafter carry pigeons. The experiment is viewed with great interest, though sceptically.

THE Band of the K. O. L. Regiment will play the following programme at the Officers' Mess this evening, commencing at 8 o'clock:—

1. Overture, "Fidèle," Beethoven.
2. Selection, "Reminiscences of Mozart," Arr. F. Godeaux.
3. Valse, "Bon Alerte," W. Waldteufel.
4. Intermezzo, from "Cavalleria Rusticana," Mascagni.
5. Selection, "Kiss Me, O The Rhine," Donizetti.
6. Valse, "Kiss Me, O The Rhine," Donizetti.

A CURIOUS effect of hard cycling is reported from France. Out of the "at batch" of conscripts no fewer than eight widely known cyclists were rejected as being physically incapable of military duty. Diseases of the heart were the chief reasons for their rejection. This causes profound astonishment, all classes thinking them at least fit to be accepted as military cyclists.

A PAIR of sheers 150 feet in length, to lift 100 tons, are to be erected at the Devonport dockyard. The cost of the sheers and machinery will be £3,200. The item recalls the fact that a similar work was accomplished at the Mare Island Navy-yard U.S. in 1887, where the sheers and machinery were built in the department of steam engineering under Chief Engineer Kutz for the sum of £11,930.

"I DEMAND the suspension of the policeman for giving false evidence," said George Wilson, or Thompson, who was charged under the Vagrancy Act at the Central Police Court, Sydney, lately. "He must mean somebody else, I never did nothing." Constable Jackson had just explained that Wilson was a most undesirable citizen, of whom many complaints had lately been received from residents of Kent-street. The charge against him was based principally upon the fact that he "never did nothing." "Look here, Colonel—I mean, yer Honor, this is a bad mistake," said the accused, as other officers contributed items to his character. "How do you get your living?" he was asked. "Well," he said, flourishing some extremely dirty soap-suckers, "I spend mainly upon these. But—" "How old are you?" said Sergeant Davis. "Oh, 35 or 36, I think." He looked 50, but evidently calculated his age from the date of his most recent abominations. "I have a list of sentences here amounting in all to twenty-nine years ten months and twenty-one days. Don't they all apply to you?" said Davis. "Yes, but—" "When did you come out of goal last?" said Mr. MacIntosh, D.S.M. "You must have started young," "Last December, but—" "Six months' hard labour in Paramatta Gaol, next case," said his Worship. A constable stepped forward to escort Wilson out, but he tripped along as if he knew the way.

MESSRS. Wheelock & Co.'s *Freight Market Report*, dated Shanghai, and May, says:—We have no particular improvement to report in the quantity of cargo going home from here. London steamers seem to have fared slightly better, while for New York shippers apparently satisfied their demand for tonnage by the recent departure, very little freight being obtainable for the next vessel. The supply of "Sail" tonnage usual at this time of year has been conspicuous by its absence, there being little or no enquiry for same. Coastwise.—Steamers seem to be satisfactorily fixed for some time forward and consequently little demand exists. From Hongkong to Japan rates are weak, though a better feeling is anticipated at an early date. From Japan, Coal rates are strong, \$3.25 from Nagasaki having been paid and this we quote from Molt also. For London via Suez—Rates have been increased 3/0 all round, but in our quotations given below we have only corrected that on Tea, other changes not coming into force until the 21st May.

Rates of Freight by Conference Lines.	General Cargo, W. 8/11.	Tea, 45/0.
London	35/0	37/0
Northern Coast Port	35/0	37/0
New York via London	44/0	45/0
Baltimore via London	44/0	45/0
Kobe via London	44/0	45/0
Manila via London	44/0	45/0
London via Suez	44/0	45/0
Liverpool	44/0	45/0
Hamburg	44/0	45/0

Above rates are subject to a deferred rebate, as per Conference Circular.

COMPLIMENT TO MR. N. J. EDE.

At the meeting of the Sanitary Board this afternoon the Capt. Superintendent of Police Hon. F. H. May said that before proceeding with the business he begged leave as the eldest member of the Board to present to the Board that this was the last meeting at which they would have the co-operation of Mr. Ede. For the last 19 years Mr. Ede had been a member of the Board and he thought that the Board never possessed a more industrious and hard working member than Mr. Ede. In Mr. Ede the Board had an industrious member and a member who brought to the working of the Board a keen intelligence and more than ordinary tact and discretion. To his wise counsel and to his practical knowledge of the Colony and human affairs in general the Board owed a great deal and was also indebted for his valuable assistance in dealing with many difficult points that came before it. He thought that the Board would suffer a very severe loss when Mr. Ede left them and he felt sure that it would be found very difficult to replace him on the Board. He begged leave to move the following resolution:—That this Board desires to express its great regret at losing the services of Mr. Ede and wishes to convey to Mr. Ede great appreciation of the valuable assistance he has rendered to the Board during the many years he has devoted himself to the cause of sanitation in this Colony. Dr. J. M. Atkinson said he had much pleasure in seconding the motion. Although he had not been associated with Mr. Ede as long as the last President had been, and although they had not always been in accord, yet for sound common sense and knowledge of business habits he was sure they could not have a better member on the Board.

The motion was put to the meeting and was carried unanimously.

Mr. Ede, in reply said:—Mr. President, Mr. May and gentlemen—I feel highly honoured by the very flattering remarks which you have just passed with regard to my services on this Board and I thank the mover and seconder of the resolution for the very complimentary terms in which they have spoken of me. I have felt it a privilege, and it has been a source of much pleasure to me, to have taken part in the promotion of sanitation in this Colony. I was appointed a member of the Board almost from the commencement about 19 years ago. For the 40 years previous, that is from the time when the island was first taken, there had been no specially organised body for dealing with such matters. At first we sat with closed doors, but it was found desirable that the meetings of the Board should be held in public. In my opinion publicity is the greatest possible protection to the inhabitants in regard to all Sanitary enactments and is one of the means best calculated to secure the co-operation of the community. Notwithstanding the criticisms upon the acts and methods of the Board, which have from time to time been made, I think I can truly say that the Board has done much useful and valuable work, and I feel satisfied it will continue to do so proportionately better and better as time goes on. Critics sometimes do not realise or are not aware of the inherent difficulties which beset many of the questions that have to be determined. There is no doubt that some of our principal troubles arise from errors made in the past partly by the Government in permitting but mainly by the inhabitants in erecting unwholesome and insanitary dwellings. I hope that this state of things will gradually be remedied (it cannot be done all at once) and that the residents will not rest content with criticising but will take a share in the work and help the Board and the Government to make the much needed improvements. I would like to take the opportunity of placing on record my opinion, though not with a view to argument to-day, that the general adoption of the water carriage system in this Colony will only lead to serious trouble and I hope the experiment will not be tried, especially as the means of hand removal are readily available and inexpensive—indeed a source of revenue. If the sewage be removed to a safe distance, if our refuse is burnt, if overcrowding is abated and the houses kept clean, but above all—above all—if plenty of sun light is let into the dwellings of masses, there is no doubt the health and general welfare of this important Colony will be much improved, and the expense of carrying out these things properly will I am satisfied in the long run be less costly than the recurrence of epidemics. I need hardly say, Mr. President and gentlemen, that I leave this Board with infinite regret and I hope to hear from time to time that your efforts to improve the sanitary condition of this Colony are meeting with unqualified success.

THE PLAGUE.

It is with extreme regret that we learned to-day that Sister Catherine (Miss Mackintosh) had developed symptoms of plague but we are glad to say that on enquiry to-day she was reported to be a little better.

A case of plague has been reported from the office of the H.K. Land and Investment Co., Ltd. We regret to have to record the death, from plague, of Miss Rochowald, aged 15 years. The deceased young lady lived with her mother at No. 4 Blue Buildings, and was noted for her musical ability. Her sad death has brought forth many expressions of sympathy for those she has left behind.

There was a story current yesterday that the servants attached to the Royal Naval Seamen's Club had been attacked by plague. On enquiry we find the story to be utterly baseless and old Harding, the manager, snorts at the idea as he draws off plates of foaming English beer.

A gunner of the Asiatic Artillery is at present under observation in hospital. He is supposed to be suffering from plague.

It is positively asserted that there has been a good deal of plague in the Italian Convent but on enquiry at the Convent to-day it was denied.

During the 24 hours up to noon, 5th May, 17 new cases and 6 deaths from plague were reported, making the total since 1st January (19 days) 107 cases and 56 deaths.

THE WAR.

The *McCulloch* is anxiously awaited with news of the fight; it is certain that if, as the Madrid telegram stated, Manila was captured on Monday evening, Commodore Dwyer must have dispatched some boat on Tuesday evening at the latest. The *McCulloch* did the trip from Singapore to Hongkong under five days, and ought therefore to do the trip from Manila to Hongkong under three days unless something has gone wrong.

The American sailing ship, *R. R. Thomas*, about which there was some anxiety, arrived in Hongkong yesterday, safe and sound. It had been thought possible that the Spaniards, although they had given her permission to leave Manila, might have captured her by virtue of their declaration by which they "reserved the rights of privateering" and the captain indeed reports that when she left Manila harbour a Spanish gunboat hung about and followed her. The Spaniards' idea seemed to be not to hurt the ship within sight of Manila or within audible distance of the fleet. The Spaniards avoided hostilities on any account with the idea of capturing the unfortunate vessel on account of darkness. It would be really not much difference from what the Spaniards have been reported to have been doing in the Atlantic. Captain Blanchard of the *R. R. Thomas* consequently avoided the use of lights and, as soon as it was dark, he doubled back on his course, and gave the gunboat the slip. This saviour very much of the dangers in the days of the *Alabama* and we congratulate the Yankee ship on his escape. Meanwhile the gunboat was seen going ahead by the people on the *R. R. Thomas*, with all her lights burning. The *Thomas* had afterwards apparently stood on her course and no more was seen of the gunboat.

The *Grand Admiral*, another American sailing ship, arrived here yesterday. She had no trouble on the voyage up from Manila. Both ships were warned at the entrance to Manila Bay, but they said the only fortifications they saw inside the bay were supplied with a few guns from the warship, on Corregidor Island. The guns had no mounting and were simply planked down on the sand-banks. The Spaniards depended almost entirely on their submarine mines. The last board communicating with the mine field was on Corregidor Island, and presumably Commodore Dewey called upon the commandant of the Corregidor garrison to surrender. Failing this, half a dozen shots would have been enough to enforce his demands. A landing party from the American fleet would then take possession of the place and the American squadron would enter with impunity. When the *R. R. Thomas* was signalled the *McCulloch* was expected and it was thought possible that as there was some similarity in the signals, the man at the Peak might have made a mistake. It turns out, however, that he was quite correct.

THE LATE MR. PATTON.

As an indication of the esteem and respect felt for Mr. Patton, who died a few days ago, after serving a term of imprisonment on a trumped-up charge of assaulting a sailor on the American ship, *R. R. Thomas*, it is worthy of note that the crew, immediately on getting back to Hongkong yesterday and hearing of his death, got up a subscription for his widow. Ten of the men who had served under Mr. Patton on his last voyage are still in the ship, and each man came forward with \$1.00—a large sum for plain sailors before the war. No doubt the rest of the men who knew him would do the same if they were here, and of them shipped in the *McCulloch*, and the others are gone now, nobody knows where. The man who made the complaint of ill-treatment and thus got the unfortunate officer imprisoned, afterwards gave the charge was unwarranted and that he never really meant it. Mr. Patton was well and favourably known among sailors outside of his own ship; and among the men of only three American sailing ships now here, another subscription of \$150 for Mrs. Patton has been raised, making \$150 for all, besides \$50 for funeral expenses and \$50 for transportation. Forcaste hands do not do this sort of thing without reason; Mr. Patton was an exceptionally popular man, one of the very last to ill-use his crew.

SANITARY BOARD.

A meeting of the Sanitary Board was held this afternoon. Present:—Dr. J. M. Atkinson, Mr. F. H. May (Captain Superintendent of Police), Mr. N. J. Ede, Mr. R. D. Omsby (Director of Public Works), Dr. F. Clark (Medical Officer of Health) and Mr. Brown (Acting Registrar General) and Mr. C. V. Ladd (Assistant Secretary).

MINUTES.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

CREMATION OF CORPSES.

A letter was laid on the table from the Acting Colonial Secretary stating that H.E. the Acting Governor was not prepared to sanction the cremation of corpses of persons who had died from plague and had been found exposed in the streets and that His Excellency trusted that the establishment of a branch hospital to the Tung Wah Hospital for the reception of Chinese plague patients would tend to effect the object of putting a stop to this objectionable practice and obviate the necessity of resorting to extreme measures.

MEDICAL INSPECTION OF VESSELS FROM MACAO AND CANTON.

A letter was laid on the table from the Acting Colonial Secretary stating that H.E. the Acting Governor wanted to know whether on further consideration and in view of the results up-to-date of the medical inspection, the Board were of opinion that it should be carried out. A letter was attached from the Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce asking that in view of the inconvenience caused medical inspection should be stopped or some modification made. The President intimated that a modification of the regulations might be permitted to allow Macao and Canton steamers to proceed to their wharves and be there medically inspected, the European passengers to come off at once, and the Chinese as soon as they were examined instead of having to wait till all have been examined.

Mr. Ede, the Registrar General and the Medical Officer of Health intimated in favour of the President's suggestion and the Captain Superintendent of Police and the Director of Public Works were of opinion that it should be discontinued.

Decided to recommend the President's suggestion to the Government.

MORTALITY STATISTICS.

The number of deaths in Hongkong during the week ending 24th April was 126, being equivalent to an annual death rate of 36.7 per thousand of the population for the corresponding period of last year the number was 88 and the annual rate per mill 18.9. For the

preceding week of this year the number was 124 and the annual rate per mill 39.3.

THE PLAGUE AT MACAO.

The returns of plague at Macao for the weeks ended 17th and 24th May showed 80 deaths during that period.

The President that the migration of Chinese for Macao should be stopped especially owing to the approaching celebration of the anniversary of Vasco da Gama at that port when there would be sure to be a large influx.

The Medical Officer of Health concurred.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Board adjourned for a fortnight.

THE PLAGUE BACILLUS.

It is now universally recognised, we are told by Mr. H. M. Birdwood, C.S.I., M.A., LL.D., who has lately been lecturing at the Imperial Institute, that the essential cause of plague is the bacillus known after the name of Dr. Kitasato—*Kitasato's bacillus*. This venomous little "beast" has nothing of stature to boast about. It would take 10,000 placed lengthwise to make an inch long, while sideways 25,000 would be needed to reach a similar distance. Upon an ordinary postage stamp a trifle of some 500 millions might rest! In shape the bacillus is a rod with rounded ends. It is cultivable in suitable media, requires oxygen for its growth, increases by fission, i.e., by dividing itself into two parts, and thus grows in number by geometrical progression at a truly alarming rate. Its greatest enemy is the sun, as exposure to direct sunlight readily kills it. In weak acids and other antiseptics it readily succumbs, and is unable to stand a temperature of 140 degrees Fahr. Whether or no the plague bacillus is able to live in the soil as is so generally supposed is held to be a moot point.

Four classes of cases have been recognised in Bombay:—

- 1.—Mild cases with buboes, in which the bacilli are less virulent.
- 2.—Severe cases.
- 3.—Pneumonic plague with or without buboes.
- 4.—Abdominal plague like typhoid fever.

Of these four classes was at first often mistaken for other diseases unless the tell-tale buboes showed themselves. It would seem that the disease may be spread by inoculation through abrasions in the skin, or in the case of pneumonic plague by breathing infected air. The period of incubation appears to vary from less than twenty-four hours to six days or more. Dr. Haffkine's prophylactic treatment is said to have been remarkably successful, inasmuch as out of some 5,000 persons that were inoculated with 18 took the disease, of whom the two who died had actually contracted the sickness before inoculation. Fortunately but very short time is needed to obtain protection; while four days are said to be necessary to gain immunity from cholera, seven for small-pox, and fifteen for rabies, protection against plague is attainable in less than 24 hours. From other sources, however, we learn that in this, as in so many other things, doctors differ.

As might be expected many methods of treatment were tried, but none could claim to be a success. Eighty per cent or so of those taken to the hospital died, and those who were discharged were said to have recovered than to have been cured.

Up to this day nothing is known with certainty as to the manner in which the plague bacillus was introduced into Bombay. Except from the coughing in the pneumonic type it is held to be but slightly infectious, and stress is laid upon the statement that during May, 1894, notwithstanding the prevalence of the plague in Hongkong and the intimate connection between the place and Macao, not a single case occurred in the latter city. It is well known, however, that there are certain places where plague is endemic or "at home," and it is doubtful from these that it is imported into others. As it has been proved to be both contagious and infectious in a slight degree, it is also believed to be miasmatic. Experience in Northern India and China is held to have proved so much. Rats become infected with the disease, and by emigration spread it far and wide in spite of the most stringent of cordons for prevention. Corpses are also a source of infection, and are called upon in which it has been proved that the rats die for more than a month. As evidence of the miasmatic source of the disease it has been noted it is usually at its worst when the weather is at its driest, or as in the case of Hongkong in 1894 after a long period of drought. Rain is usually antagonistic, but no absolute rule has been established as experience varies somewhat. Great heat sometimes kills out the bacillus entirely. No special sort of soil, and no particular state of the ground has a monopoly of this most unwholesome visitor. It has been found to thrive as well on the bleak hill side as in the sheltered valley; in the damp soil as much as in the dry.

One thing seems to be proved beyond all cavil—that plague is a disease of the poor and ill-fed, and not of the well-nourished and rich. Very few Europeans are attacked and of those who are a large proportion recover. Even in European visitations in historical times there was the same well-marked characteristic; the poor died, the rich escaped.

Experience in Bombay proves only too plainly that Kitasato's bacillus is no mean enemy. Where he once has found a home he is not so easily ousted as we might wish. Amongst the many sanitary measures taken by the Municipal Authorities in Bombay there are enumerated disinfection by burning sulphur, lime-washing, cleansing and disinfection of drains, free distribution of disinfectants, removal of obstructions to light and air, removal of flies from roofs, compulsory removal of people from infected dwellings, and the disinfection or burning of soiled articles. Additional cases did occur in houses after disinfection, but they were rare, and it is believed that notwithstanding the failure to check the disease entirely, its ravages were kept within smaller bounds than ever before. Towards the end more stringent measures for segregation of cases were adopted. But much opposition had to be overcome owing to the ignorance and prejudices of the natives. That they should fight shy of the hospitals when they are likely out of every hundred patients die was natural enough.

Much has been written about the insanitary state of Bombay in general, and certain of the native quarters in particular, but it is worth noting that the chaplain of the Byculla Gaol, a gentleman with an intimate knowledge of the subject, writes to *The Times* to state that notwithstanding the density of the population the condition of the Bombay poor is not worse than that of the poor in the big cities of Europe. There is much valuable information to be culled from Mr. Birdwood's lecture both for those in authority and for the private citizen. The former may be trusted to keep abreast of the latest information; the latter will do well to remember that a well-nourished body is a well-cleaned, well-ventilated, well-lighted house has nothing to fear from plague. Sun-light and plenty of it is nature's own prophylactic.

By G. Daily News.

MR. BALFOUR ON THE CHINA QUESTION.

LONDON, April 5th.

In the House of Commons yesterday, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, made his promised statement regarding the policy of the Government in the Far East and what came of it. He stated that the impossibility of submitting papers during the continuance of negotiations, combined with the extraordinary and unaccountable paralysis of China, had provoked attacks upon the Government. Her Majesty's Ministers had, however, adhered strictly to the policy announced by him (Mr. Balfour) at Manchester on January 11th. He had stated on that occasion that Great Britain's interests in that quarter of the globe were of a commercial rather than of a territorial character, and that while the Government desired freedom of trade with China for the whole world, she would resist all attempts on the part of other Powers to destroy what he described as 'an equality of opportunity to all countries.' In pursuance of that policy Great Britain had, said Mr. Balfour, already obtained great commercial concessions. Germany's interests he continued, were absolutely identical with those of Great Britain, while, with regard to Russia, the Government did not believe that that country would in any way interfere with Britain's treaty rights, while her policy or railway extension in Manchuria and of open ports was calculated to prove highly beneficial to commerce. If Russia remained satisfied with the occupation of China so ports which were either ice bound or held under conditions which required freedom of trade, the balance of power would be undisturbed. Believing that the occupation of Port Arthur by Russia would prove a constant menace to Peking, Lord Salisbury had offered that if Russia would agree to abstain from occupying that port, Great Britain would not seek to occupy any port in the Gulf of Pechili. Russia, however, refused to agree to this proposal, with the result that Great Britain had secured a lease of Wei-hai-wai on the same terms and conditions as those upon which Russia had occupied Port Arthur. Regarding the relative strategic merits of Port Arthur and Wei-hai-wai, Mr. Balfour expressed the view that, although the latter possessed a natural strength, it was capable of accommodating larger ships and a larger Military and Naval force. Moreover by the occupation of Wei-hai-wai by Great Britain the Gulf of Pechili was prevented from falling under Russia's undisputed domination and control. In conclusion, Mr. Balfour said the Government were hopeful of the Chinese Empire being opened to universal trade, and that Great Britain would still maintain a real suzerainty over the country. Failing this, the Powers, commercially interested, might conclude Mr. Balfour, as stated upon the subject, an alliance which would prevent China from falling a prey to the exclusive interests of any Power. At the conclusion of his voluminous statement Mr. Balfour was greeted with loud cheers.

Mr. William Harcourt, the leader of the Opposition, replying to Mr. Balfour's statement regarding affairs in Eastern Asia, declared that the Government had abandoned its policy of 'equality of opportunity' in favour of one of 'rival occupation.'

Mr. G. N. Curzon, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, said that Wei-hai-wai was a favourable port for observation, and that, therefore, its occupation would facilitate the 'policy of the open door.'

Continuing, he said that Russia had explicitly admitted the right of British warships to enter Port Arthur.

He added that the British occupation of Wei-hai-wai had not disturbed either Japan or Germany.

Sir Edward Grey, who was Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the last Liberal administration, contended that the occupation of Wei-hai-wai would prove extremely expensive, and he doubted whether, at any cost, its occupation would prove to have restored that balance of power which had previously existed.

Lord Charles Barington, Conservative member for York, on the other hand, held that the acquisition by Britain of Wei-hai-wai would prove an excellent counterpoise to Russia's occupation of Port Arthur.

The debate was then adjourned till the 18th instant.

The Duke of Devonshire in a speech has stated that Port Arthur gave Russia a strategic sea advantage and by its means she menaced Peking. The occupation of Wei-hai-wai by Britain would lessen Chinese apprehensions. At China's request her warships would be allowed facilities at Wei-hai-wai and Britain had consented to train her Naval officers.

Lord Kimberley says that the dismemberment of China is inevitable.

GYMNASIA PROGRAMME.

The following is the prospectus for the second Gymkhana Meeting, 1898 season:—

FIVE FURLONGS, for China ponies; weight as per scale with 4 lbs. added; winners at this season's Gymkhana, once \$50; twice or often, 10 lbs. extra; 1st prize, \$50; and prize, \$30; 3rd, saves his entrance; entrance, \$5.

HURDLE RACE, start at two mile post, once round and in, over 8 ft. of hurdles; for China ponies; weight as per scale with 7 lbs. added; winners of a Steeplechase at this season's Gymkhana, 5 lbs. extra; 1st prize, \$50 and prize, \$25; 3rd, saves his entrance; entrance, \$5.

ONCE ROUND HANDICAP, for subscription ponies of any season; entrance, 10; 1st prize, \$25; 2nd, \$15; 3rd, \$10; 4th, \$5; 5th, \$3; 6th, \$2; 7th, \$1; 8th, \$1; 9th, \$1; 10th, \$1; 11th, \$1; 12th, \$1; 13th, \$1; 14th, \$1; 15th, \$1; 16th, \$1; 17th, \$1; 18th, \$1; 19th, \$1; 20th, \$1; 21st, \$1; 22nd, \$1; 23rd, \$1; 24th, \$1; 25th, \$1; 26th, \$1; 27th, \$1; 28th, \$1; 29th, \$1; 30th, \$1; 31st, \$1; 32nd, \$1; 33rd, \$1; 34th, \$1; 35th, \$1; 36th, \$1; 37th, \$1; 38th, \$1; 39th, \$1; 40th, \$1; 41st, \$1; 42nd, \$1; 43rd, \$1; 44th, \$1; 45th, \$1; 46th, \$1; 47th, \$1; 48th, \$1; 49th, \$1; 50th, \$1; 51st, \$1; 52nd, \$1; 53rd, \$1; 54th, \$1; 55th, \$1; 56th, \$1; 57th, \$1; 58th, \$1; 59th, \$1; 60th, \$1; 61st, \$1; 62nd, \$1; 63rd, \$1; 64th, \$1; 65th, \$1; 66th, \$1; 67th, \$1; 68th, \$1; 69th, \$1; 70th, \$1; 71st, \$1; 72nd, \$1; 73rd, \$1; 74th, \$1; 75th, \$1; 76th, \$1; 77th, \$1; 78th, \$1; 79th, \$1; 80th, \$1; 81st, \$1; 82nd, \$1; 83rd, \$1; 84th, \$1; 85th, \$1; 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